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Sandeep Mukherjee, *Untitled (Long Gold Spiral)* (2008)

Art Around Town

At the galleries

BY CHRISTOPHER MILES

Sandeep Mukherjee at Sister and Cottage Home

There probably aren't words for how I felt when looking at Sandeep Mukherjee's paintings in acrylic ink and other media on variously etched and embossed Duralene (a translucent plastic sheet material), currently on view in Chinatown at Sister and just up Broadway at Cottage Home, a much larger space operated jointly by Sister and a group of other small galleries. You don't have to be a romantic or a spiritually inclined person to have a romantic or spiritual experience with these paintings, which simply trigger something of both. It isn't by way of image, symbol or narrative. Yes, Mukherjee often deals in radiant bursts, luminous glows and spirals that are suggestive of mandalas, mandorlas, sunspots and the cosmic abstractions of the late, great Los Angeles painter Lee Mullican to whom Mukherjee is an artistic heir, but his ability to make you

exercise contemplative muscles you might not have known you have isn't about reference or allusion. Rather, it's about his awe-inspiring command of line, movement and luminosity. At Cottage Home, a large composition of wispy lines, which defines a perceptual experience something like looking into hazy sky from within a thicket, is at once woozying, liberating and haunting. On view at both spaces, Mukherjee's compositions of overlapping, intertwining, interrupted and unfinished spirals, daubed in translucent strokes that turn the Duralene surface into a kind of inked mosaic, are what the phrase "poetry in motion" was meant to describe. I will make a point of returning to this exhibition during the coming weeks, and when it is over, my summer will feel the lesser. *Sister*, 437 Gin Ling Way, L.A., Tues.-Sat., 11 a.m.-6 p.m., and *Cottage Home*, 410 Cottage Home Rd., L.A., Wed.-Sat., 12 a.m.-6 p.m.; thru June 21. (213) 628-7000 or www.sisterla.com.